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SECURITY PLAN MEETS NALGO AIMS

—Page 203

THE PROBLEM OF LONDON

IMAGINE that every single building in York, Reading, Halifax, Ipswich, and Northampton has been razed to the ground and all their inhabitants left homeless. Imagine that, in addition, every house in Newport, Oxford, Wallasey, Grimsby, Rochdale, Burnley, West Bromwich, Wigan, Exeter, and Bath has been so badly damaged that nobody can live in it without extensive repair. On top of that, imagine that every house in every one of the sixty biggest urban districts in England and Wales has lost some of its windows, slates, or ceilings. Imagine, finally, that this situation exists at the beginning of a sixth winter of war, and that there is one workman for every ten houses to do the repairs.

That would be regarded as a national disaster, calling for the full mobilisation of every national resource to the aid of its victims. But is it? For the picture is no imaginary one. It is an exact parallel of the position of London today, as revealed in published figures; of London alone, ignoring the plight of many other equally battered towns and villages of Southern England.

Out of Greater London's pre-war population of eight millions—again calculating from official statements—about one million three hundred thousand have lost their homes or had them made unhabitable without substantial repair, and must live with relatives or friends, in billets, or in public shelters. Of the remaining six-and-three-quarter millions, more than three millions are facing the winter in homes flimsily protected against rain, cold, and draughts, with often a tarpaulin for roof, paper or cloth for windows, doors warped or splintered, and ceilings and walls patched with board.

Much Being Done, But——

An appalling problem! It is—and but for the uncomplaining patience, the cheerful good-humour of the Londoner, which increase with adversity, it would be a dangerous problem. His blood never boils—and he may be too cold this winter for it even to reach normal heat. But were he so constituted it certainly would reach boiling point when he reads of provincial hostesses pressing his evacuated women and children to return home "now that the danger is over," or sees in provincial newspapers the advertisements of builders and decorators touting for work.

What is being done about it? A great deal. Sir Malcolm Trustram Eve, transferred from the payment of war damage claims to control of war damage repair, has embarked on his stupendous task with speed, vision, and imagination. He has mobilised the whole of London's building resources to the job, prohibiting all other work until it has been completed. He has brought in many thousands of builders from outside, from the Forces, and from Civil Defence, so that the London repair army now totals 100,000. He has put the local authorities—to whose knowledge and efficiency he has paid generous tribute—in general charge. He is speeding up the supply of repair materials, some of which have been woefully short. He is building temporary huts and requisitioning empty premises to be used as billets.

Could more be done? In our view, yes. We agree with Sir Malcolm that priority must be given to repair. It is his own home, however mean, that the Londoner wants, not a hut in Hyde Park nor a corner of a requisitioned Mayfair mansion. But we believe that the work of repair could be accelerated still further.

First, labour. It is doubtful whether the 100,000 workers now in London are being used to best advantage. Many were simply withdrawn from big contracting firms and handed over, often without notice, to the local authorities without plant or materials—and the authorities were already short of both. Others came from small firms of two or three men, unable to make up a balanced gang, and presenting an insoluble problem of accounting and payment to already depleted treasurers' staffs. Big firms should take over whole areas, providing their own plant; small ones should be banded together into gangs that are efficiently balanced and effectively controlled.

Much more labour is needed, especially that of skilled craftsmen—but Sir Malcolm, while admitting that it could be found in the provinces, argues that it cannot be used because there is nowhere for the men to live and sleep and nobody to look after them. This is admittedly a difficult problem—as has been indicated by the public outcry over the use of requisitioned houses for Italian workers. But we are not satisfied that it is insoluble. There is still accommodation in London in the occupation of the Forces, British and Allied, which might be used were its present occupants to be sent elsewhere. There are still hotels which might be taken over—with their staffs to cater for the workers—at no intolerable hardship for those who now use them. There are still premises which could be requisitioned were the process of requisitioning to be made easier. And the argument that it is futile to requisition buildings when you cannot find cooks, cleaners, and laundry workers, leaves the Londoner cold at a time when his Sunday newspapers are filled with the advertisements of hotels offering hospitality in coastal and country resorts. The Minister of Labour has unlimited powers over all workers; he could close down those hotels, pack the holidaymakers off home, and direct their staffs to London hostels. The situation is of a gravity to justify such drastic action. Acton alone estimates that the labour force now allotted to it will take more than two years to complete its repairs.

Cut the Red Tape!

Next, materials. That they are short, we know; that their manufacture is being stepped up to the limit, we believe. But there must still exist in shops and warehouses in undamaged towns a substantial quantity of glass, board, roofing felt, laths, nails, tiles, and slates. Cannot all this be requisitioned, together with the necessary ladders, tarpaulins, and other plant, to tide London over until the material now being made becomes available in sufficient quantity?

Londoners must forgo all building, repair, and redecoration work until the most urgent claims of war damage have been met; and the provinces should be required to make a similar sacrifice.

Third, organisation. Local authorities, despite the most vigorous protests, were robbed of the bulk of their expert staffs before the flying bomb attacks began. The few who remain are working untold hours, but they cannot do the impossible. They must have help—expert help. Some has been given, but more is needed. Fully-trained officers from the surveyors', housing, billeting, and treasurers' departments of provincial towns should be, not invited, but *directed* into London. And Government departments must cut more red tape. There are many Whitehall departments on the job, and they still insist on strict fulfilment of every letter of every relevant regulation. As in the earlier "blitz," they are unwilling to "leave it to the man on the spot" and too ready to put the brake on local enterprise which happens to be unorthodox.

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Whitehall, having put the major burden on the local authorities, should give them the fullest co-operation, the fullest freedom, and all available expert help. It is not enough to leave it to the individual local government officer "to make the best of what he himself regards as a bad job"—as one of them put it.

Fourth, evacuees. It is well known that many thousands of women and children who left London when the flying-bomb attack was at its height have now returned—thanks largely to the premature enthusiasm of Mr. Duncan Sandys to tell the world that the attack was over. That statement did untold harm—but its effect might be reduced even now were the evacuees and their hosts to be told more fully of the situation in London and why they should still stay away. In present circumstances, one cannot blame either the evacuees who come back or the hosts who press them to do so; both presumably imagine that life in London is normal. Tell them the truth, clearly, vividly, and repeatedly, and they would understand. London is still a danger zone, for cold and damp are more deadly than bombs.

More Self-Help Needed

Finally, we suggest that, given a little advice and assistance, Londoners could and would do much more than they have hitherto been asked or allowed to do to help themselves. Most men and women can reglaze a window, board up a wall or ceiling, and even replace slates and tiles, if they are shown how. Naturally, they could not do the more extensive jobs. But if, in every area, instructional classes were organised, householders canvassed, and materials supplied, much of the simpler repair work could be done by householders themselves, leaving the skilled workers free for the more difficult tasks. This is an emergency, and emergencies call for unorthodox measures.

These comments are made in no sense of criticism. All concerned—householders, local authorities (with gravely depleted and overworked staffs), Government departments, voluntary organisations—have performed and are performing miracles. But still greater miracles are required if London is to escape a winter of acute discomfort and possibly much sickness.

Few people even in London, and probably none outside it, yet appreciate the extent of the problem, how much has been done, and how much more remains to be done. Were all the departments concerned to provide the Press with a full joint statement, expressed in human terms, of the extent of the damage, of what has been accomplished, and of what is still needed; were they to supplement this with a weekly progress report; were they to reply to every valid criticism and comment; and were the London local authorities similarly to take their citizens into their confidence, we should be nearer a solution. A crisis of this magnitude calls for the co-operation, on a national scale, of every agency and every citizen in the country. But that co-operation will not be forthcoming until the need for it is understood.

End of the Part III. Authority

SINCE we last noticed the topic, the Government's plans for educational reform have become law in the Education Act, 1944. As a result, many boroughs and district councils will soon lose their status as Part III education authorities—i.e. authorities for elementary education only—and with the exception of areas in which joint boards of adjacent counties or county boroughs are set up, the sole authorities for all forms of education will be the county borough and county councils. It is believed that joint boards will be resorted to only where the normal authorities are small or poor. Five adjacent and sparsely populated counties in Wales—Brecon, Cardigan, Monmouth, Montgomery, and Radnor—are submitting their inability to carry out the provisions of the Act without considerable additional grant, but it is difficult to see how a joint board could help them.

In the county boroughs, the administration will be unitary. In the counties, something like a federal system will be created; in place of the original proposal in the White Paper of 1943 to set up district committees of the county council as the education authority, the Government worked out a new scheme of divisional executives to exercise substantial delegated powers. In the course of the Parliamentary debate, the Minister promised "the most up-to-date system of delegation that the local government world has ever known." Circular 5, recently issued by his Department, accords with this promise, putting forward practicable suggestions for the relationship between the local authority and its district executives.

Benefits of Delegation

The Act provides that boroughs or districts with a general population of 60,000 or an elementary school child population of 7,000 in 1939 shall, if they so desire, be excepted from the scheme for divisional administration to be prepared by each local education authority. In exceptional circumstances, the Minister may also direct that other boroughs and districts may be so excepted. Exception means that the council of the borough or district becomes itself the divisional executive, exercising a substantial range of delegated functions. An arrangement of this kind has obvious advantages. It enables educational provision, and in particular the siting of schools, to be more easily adjusted to the general conditions of the town and co-ordinated with other services, because the borough or district council can deal with the agency functions in the educational field in conjunction with the services, such as housing, etc., for which it is itself responsible.

Moreover, suitable boroughs and districts have a considerable administrative apparatus of their own which could serve the county education authority in such matters as, for instance, local accountancy and the upkeep of schools; and an arrangement of this kind would mean that the services would be on the spot, and that the county council would not need to duplicate staff for the same purposes. An *ad hoc* divisional executive with substantial agency functions will be better than nothing, but granted a fairly substantial area with a real community of interest, the exercise of the agency functions by the borough or district council itself will be better still. We hope, therefore, that the Minister will not feel too much bound, in exercising his discretion to create excepted districts, by the population standards which *entitle* boroughs or districts to become such, but will consider the character of the area and the local circumstances, bearing in mind the advantages which agency by the borough or district council would have.

Staffing Social Security

THERE is unlikely to be any shortage of staff for the new social security services. It is estimated that 6,000 central government officials, freed from their duties in other departments, will be available for the headquarters; while for local administration (by far the most important part of the scheme) there will be the 12,000 officers of the Assistance Board and 3,000 transferred from public assistance authorities. All these men and women will have experience of social administration. But will that be enough? Many experts are urging that a qualification in social science administration should be regarded as essential for all above the ranks of the routine workers. It is hard to see how a social administrator can work effectively to-day without a working knowledge of such subjects as psychology, machinery of government, soci statistics, and the ramifications of volunta agencies.

These considerations were stressed by S William Beveridge himself at a conferen convened by the Social Security League September 30. There need be no increase the number of staff, he said, but there should a raising of their calibre.

Dr. Ling, of the Roffey Park Rehabilitati Centre, described the elaborate training of Arm officers, and the stringent tests they had undergo before selection. Can it be, he aske that the public service is the only field employment in which training is unnecessar and scientific tests of suitability are inappr priate?

Mr. L. C. White, of the Civil Service Cleric Association, urged that the first step to ensu that the new services were well run was provide proper staff conditions. The displac staff should have every chance of accepti transfer, but they should be made suitab for their new tasks by training. Anoth speaker called for consultation of the rank a file: the worm's eye view was as importa as the bird's eye view.

There are three main groups of staff to considered: those in the existing service recruits at present in war service; and tho to be recruited direct from school. The training needs are different. The old han want a refresher course, informative a inspirational, conceived in the spirit of bro humanitarianism in which it is hoped that t new service will function. For those in t Forces, a longer and more detailed course needed, but it should avoid the academi New entrants should, if possible, pass throu a university course either for a degree or diploma in social science.

Building Costs

CAMBERWELL Borough Council h announced that, if subsidies remain their present basis, working-class rents will over 30s. a week. There are two moral First, that subsidies must remain an inevitab feature of housing policy; and second th the reasons for the high cost of housing oug to be fully investigated.

'Rent is already a serious burden. T Oxford Institute of Statistics has just publishe the results of an inquiry which show ho heavily rent falls on the poor. Expressed a percentage of family income, rent stood 8.9 per cent for those earning over £15 a wee but at 29 per cent for those earning und £2 a week; generally, the figure is 15.6 per cen

Figures published by the Building Industri National Council show that, as a field f investment, the building trade is rising popularity; an index of share prices with base of 100 in 1935 stood last year at 120 in cement, at 137.7 in iron and steel, at 115 in paint, while the total in building materia was 111.2. In other words, there are goo profits to be made in the building trade.

Iron and steel has been in the front of t news. Lord Nuffield talks of setting up h own steel works to circumvent the high pric charged for sheet metal; and his henchma Sir Miles Thomas, talks of "old inefficie plants" in the iron and steel trade bei subsidised out of the profits of the newer on When it is remembered that one main type prefabricated house is largely dependent up steel, the importance of a full inquiry in production costs and charges is seen to essential.

It is the aim of "Local Government Service to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion a expression within the Association. Unless t fact is expressly stated, therefore, views p forward in this journal—whether in the editor columns or in signed articles—should not nece sarily be regarded as expressing the conside policy of the Association.

Government's Social Insurance Policy Embodies NALGO's Aims

By W. O. DODD, LL.B., Deputy Town Clerk, Brighton

WHEN, early in 1942, the Beveridge Committee invited NALGO to submit evidence to it, it presented the Association with a challenge which was limned in the invitation itself :

" One question your Association may wish to raise is the treatment of local government officers for the purpose of the various national insurance schemes. Another probable subject is the position of local government officers under any proposals to transfer from a local authority . . . but, in addition . . . there may be matters . . . to which you feel the wide range of interest and experience of your Association requires you to call attention."

The special sub-committee appointed by the N.E.C. to prepare a statement, faced the challenge : should the Association confine its attention to domestic, personal, and, let us admit it, selfish matters such as the position of local government officers under any proposals to transfer powers ; or, should it apply its wide range of interest and experience in the welfare of the community at large, and put forward proposals national rather than sectarian in character ? Does not Mr. Irate Ratepayer constantly remind us that we are in sheltered occupations, that we have assured employment until retiring age, and at retiring age there is a substantial pension ? Are not many of us already excepted from National Health Insurance because our conditions of service provide at least equal benefits ? Why should we be bothered with all this Security stuff ? On the face of it, NALGO might very well have been expected merely to take all possible steps to uphold the position and prestige of its members and nothing more. It is to its enduring credit that selfish interests did not prevail but were subordinated to the common good.

Fundamental Assumptions

It was recognised that the Beveridge Committee had been set up not only to provide a more efficient and comprehensive system of insurance, but that the main purpose to be achieved by insurance is freedom from want, realising that freedom from want depends on planned economy directed to avoiding mass unemployment. It was also recognised that the trend of history is the passing of responsibility for security from the family to the tribe, from the tribe to the community, and during this century we have seen it in process of passing from the community to the nation.

Before proceeding to formulate a statement of policy, the N.E.C. sub-committee also formulated its own assumptions, which are pertinent to the consideration of any national social insurance scheme :

(*a*) There is no argument capable of supporting the present practice of administering the bulk of such assistance as does exist on a national basis, and leaving the dregs to be a burden on the local authority, through the medium of the Poor Law.

(*b*) A planned post-war economy should reduce, as the present war economy largely does, the need for unemployment assistance and unemployment insurance.

(*c*) A planned economy must be linked with the universal system of social insurance. The building up of large funds is not necessarily good economics, and must in the long run depend on the productivity of the nation rather than on ledger balances.

(*d*) The productivity of the nation is influenced by the higher proportion of older people to younger people, which proportion is increasing by reason of the declining birth rate and the lower death rate.

(*e*) Making higher education available to all who are able to take advantage of it, irrespective of their parents' financial position, would wipe out the necessity for private savings for this purpose.

(*f*) In any ideal scheme, the benefits would not be related to contributions.

Association's Proposals

NALGO's proposals as submitted to the Beveridge Committee are set out below to indicate their striking similarity to the White Paper proposals, and the extent to which the Association is committed as to general policy as distinct from detail :

1. *The ideal scheme would be a single social security insurance covering health, unemployment, compensation for industrial accident and disease, widows' and orphans' pensions and old age pensions.*

The Social Insurance White Paper setting out the Government's proposals, provides a universal scheme of social insurance for these purposes, together with family allowances and death grant.

2. *To achieve true economy there should be* (*a*) *one uniform scheme,* (*b*) *one inclusive contribution with one stamp to cover all social insurance, and* (*c*) *one administrative point in each locality administering the scheme.*

These are also the proposals of the Government.

3. *NALGO is not in favour of the granting of certificates of exception. The exceptions so far granted with regard to national health insurance have been of doubtful benefit, and it is not considered possible to recommend contracting out of part of the unified scheme.*

The Government proposes to make the scheme universal.

4. *There should be uniformity in rates of contributions and benefits throughout the country implying central control of policy. (It was not the intention of NALGO that the same contribution should be paid by everyone and the same benefit received by everyone. The phrase used was "uniformity in rates.")*

The Government proposals provide just this.

5. *Contributions should be shared between employer, employee and State.*

Taking Class 1.—i.e. employees—(men only), of the full *actuarial* contribution of 85.7 pence per week, 34.7d. is to be provided by the insured person, 31.9d. by the employer and 19.1d. by the Exchequer ; but the Exchequer contribution is *actually* much greater, for extended national assistance and family allowances will fall entirely upon public funds, and the new national health and the new education proposals, which are intimately connected with the social insurance scheme, will call for large Exchequer payments.

6. *There should be a universal flat rate of benefit above subsistence level, with provision for dependants.*

The table on the next page shows that the Government proposals are mainly in accord with NALGO's in this regard.

It is not possible in the space available to analyse the White Paper and its effect upon all classes of local government officer so that each reader may know where he stands in relation to insurance commitments and benefits. The table indicates the general position, and in any event the press has already summarised the proposals admirably.

Some points, however, are of special interest to members of NALGO. They will, for example, note with misgivings the absence of any reference to compensation for loss of office by those whose work will be superseded by the new Ministry of Social Insurance. Concurrently with the submission of the above proposals to the Beveridge Committee, the Association submitted a claim for protection of its members. The principle that compensation shall be paid for loss of office caused by changes for the common good has been strenuously fought by NALGO for a number of years and has been accepted by Parliament as an established principle.

The proposals summarised below were submitted by the Association to the Local Government Committee of the T.U.C. and adopted by that Committee. They were made direct to Sir William Beveridge at his invitation, after the Association had given verbal evidence, to his committee :

1. Compensation to be paid to any existing employee who by reason of the scheme suffers any direct pecuniary loss, such loss to be calculated in accordance with the principles contained in the 4th Schedule to the Local Government Act, 1933 ;
2. Existing employees to be transferred to the new organisation ;
3. No employee so transferred to be placed without his consent in any worse position in respect to the conditions of his service as a whole ;
4. Transferred employees to have the right to relinquish employment within five years of transfer where they are called upon to perform duties not analagous to or an unreasonable addition to those now being performed ;
5. Employees who so relinquish an appointment, or suffer reduction of emoluments within five years, to be deemed to have suffered a direct pecuniary loss so as to give rise to compensation.
6. Transferred employees to have the right of appeal to the appropriate Minister.

Compensation Claim Ignored

It was not expected that these proposals would be set out in Sir William Beveridge's Report, but he accepted the principles in the following passages :

"Loss of office : Provisions will be required to prevent hardship in the case of persons employed in the administration of the present insurance schemes or the allied services who are displaced as a result of the changes made and for whom suitable alternative employment is not available . . ."

"Some changes and transfers are inevitable and it is essential that, in making these changes for the common good, the community should do justice to those whose livelihoods are affected by them."

The White Paper contains practically no reference to this part of Sir William Beveridge's Report, but paragraph 183, which probably does not refer to local government officers, reads :

"It will also be necessary at a later stage to work out in detail the arrangements for transferring functions of the existing agencies which it is not proposed to utilise in the new scheme, and for winding them up."

It is as well to remember that those whose livelihoods will be adversely affected include many besides local government officers. Indeed, we are a small minority. It has been stated in the press that there are 81,000 insurance agents alone.

Administration. There is to be at the outset an entirely new Ministry of Social Insurance responsible for the family allowance scheme and the administration of national assistance as well as the whole of social insurance. The 1943 Conference by a decisive vote rejected the

N.E.C.'s resolution urging that all benefits be administered through social security departments of local authorities. The N.E.C. advocated this system on the grounds that local contact and humanitarian interest could thereby be given most play.

It is interesting to observe that, since the publication of the White Paper, fears have been expressed in the press that administration by a Ministry through local offices may be too bureaucratic, and that the experience of Whitehall methods in the past raises the presumption that there will be no room for purely local consideration of the "hardship" cases, i.e. where any unusual circumstances arise. It is an essential feature of the British civil service, often quoted as justification for red tape and delay, that no precedents must be created which are not, or cannot be made, of universal application. The action of the civil servant in Mayfair must be identical with the action of his colleague in Bermondsey or Blackpool. Possibly this disadvantage must be accepted, but it is a disadvantage. The "ordinary ratepayer" can stop his council member in the street and secure his attention to his personal problem. He can, if he is so minded, attend the debate in the council chamber and see for himself how well or otherwise his complaint is ventilated. It is impracticable for John Citizen to take a similar course. Normally, the grill of the employment exchange or the inquiry counter of the government office is an impenetrable barrier. While the government scheme is being worked out in greater detail, it is hoped that special attention will be given to this problem.

Transfer of Functions. The public assistance departments of local authorities will have small reason for continuing as separate entities after the new scheme is fully operative. The poor law system, which was virtually the only social security plan from the days of Elizabeth, has undergone a rapid decline, and few will regret its passing. Its early demise is foreshadowed in paragraphs 159 and 160 of the White Paper:

"The Government proposes that the scope of National Assistance (now confined broadly to persons in receipt of old age pensions, widow pensioners with children and able-bodied persons normally employed in insurable occupations) should be extended to include financial assistance to all on proof of need; and that the administration of National Assistance should be centralised in one Department."

"Detailed proposals for bringing to an end the present system of public assistance are being worked out and will include any necessary adjustments of the existing provisions relating to the 'disregard' of certain types of resources. It suffices here to say that the health functions of the public assistance authorities will be merged in the new National Health Service: that the care and maintenance of orphaned and deserted children will remain within the sphere of local government, as will the provision of accommodation for such old persons as need it. On the other hand, the duty will be placed on the Assistance Board of making suitable provision for those, other than the sick, the young and the old, for whom assistance in cash is not appropriate."

In the result, there will be so little left for the public assistance department as it now exists, that the question is raised whether the few remaining functions cannot be transferred to other departments, as for example care of the orphaned to the education department. It is yet too early to dogmatise upon a redistribution of functions within the departments of local authorities after the war.

As in public assistance, so in the treatment of the blind, the policy adumbrated in the White Paper is to transfer to the new Ministry the payment of financial assistance, leaving other special welfare services with the local authorities. The White Paper draws attention however, to the provision in the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, whereby workshops may be established under the control of the Ministry of Labour and National Service "to provide employment under sheltered conditions for those who are so severely disabled that they could not otherwise get employment." We may yet hear that no substantial argument can be advanced for the existence side by side of such establishments, the one run by the Ministry of Labour and the other by the local authority.

Education. The proposals of the White Paper involve the education department in that a substantial part of the family allowance is to be given in kind by means of school meals and milk to all children in primary and secondary schools in receipt of grant. Great strides have been made during the war in the provision of these facilities, and local authorities and their officers should be fully alive to the necessity of planning for this development.

Superannuation. Should the existing superannuation continue or be modified? Can the officer afford the increased contribution which the new insurance scheme will involve, as well as 5 per cent or 6 per cent, as the case may be? Will the local authorities be prepared to continue their payment to superannuation funds as well as their part of the contribution to the national insurance? The White Paper does not give a definite answer:

"The simplest course from many points of view would be to pay both retirement pensions . . . but . . . the double pension would amount to very nearly as much as the previous earnings of lower paid workers . . ."

"Discussion will have to take place with representatives of the various groups concerned about the adjustments necessary, particularly those arising from the inclusion in the general insurance scheme of persons covered by existing pensions schemes."

In conclusion, one point clearly emerges. Social insurance cannot stand by itself, and should not be considered apart from the post-war plans involving employment, education, national health, housing, and to a lesser degree family allowances, in respect to which plans it is an integral part.

TODAY—AND TOMORROW

It is impossible in a single table to set out all the details of the Government's proposals. This table, however, shows the main benefits and compares them with those now available to the majority of NALGO members who contribute to Unemployment, National Health, and Pensions Insurance. Present contributions total 1s. 10d. a week for men and 1s. 7d. for women; under the proposed scheme they will total 3s. 10d. for men and 3s. for women.

	MAIN GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS	EXISTING BENEFITS
MOTHERS	£4 grant, plus 36s. maternity benefit for 13 weeks to working women not at work. Or attendant's allowance, £1 for 4 weeks, to women not eligible for maternity benefit.	£2 grant (plus 10s.—NALGO Approved Society). No attendant's allowance.
CHILDREN	5s. for each child after the first.	To persons receiving unemployment benefit only: 4s. each for first two children, 3s. each additional child.
UNEMPLOYED	24s. single man or woman; 40s. man with non-working wife, plus 5s. for first child*—for 30 weeks.	20s. men, 18s. women, plus children's allowances as above—for 26 weeks.
SICK AND INVALIDS	24s. single man or woman; 40s. man with non-working wife, plus 5s. for first child*—for 3 years. Thereafter invalidity benefit of 20s. single person, 35s. man with non-working wife, and 5s. for first child.* Free medical treatment for all.	Sickness: 18s. men, 15s. single women and widows, 13s. married women, for 26 weeks; thereafter disablement benefit, 10s. 6d. men, 9s. single women and widows, 8s. married women, with free medical treatment if earning under £420 p.a.
DEPENDANTS	16s. to persons on unemployment or sickness benefit; 15s. to those on invalidity benefit.	To persons receiving unemployment benefit only: 10s. for adult dependant.
WIDOWS	36s. for 13 weeks, thereafter guardian's benefit of 24s. plus 5s. for first child.*	10s. for life or until re-marriage, plus 5s. for first child and 3s. for each other child.
GUARDIANS	24s. plus 5s. for each child, including the first.	None.
ORPHANS	12s., including first child.	7s. 6d. each child.
OLD AGE PENSIONERS	20s. single person, 35s. man and wife, plus 1s. for each year worked after retiring age (65 men; 60 women).	10s. single: £1 married.
DEATH GRANT	Under 3—£6; 3—6, £10; 6—18, £15; over 18, £20.	None.
OTHERS IN NEED	National assistance available to all not in receipt of other benefit on proof of need.	National or local assistance available to all on proof of need.

**And, of course, 5s. p.w. for other children.*

Much has been said and written on the question, "Can the nation afford social insurance?" and much doubtless will yet be said. The high cost and its effect upon industry and trade is the most potent argument that can be advanced against the scheme. It is to be expected that it will be used extensively by those who have most to lose. Sir William Beveridge showed that the abolition of want was a practicable post-war aim:

"Want could have been abolished before the present war by a redistribution of income within the wage-earning classes, without touching any of the wealthier classes . . . [this] is said simply as the most convincing demonstration that abolition of want just before this war was easily within the economic resources of the community."

It is not sufficient to say that we cannot afford to be without such a scheme, but—and it is a very big but—we cannot afford mass unemployment, and unless it is avoided the outlook is dark indeed. Sir William Beveridge contended that a social insurance fund would be a stabilising factor, but this again is not enough. There is in the social insurance and in the other plans for education, national health, and so on, a challenge to our nation. In the conclusion to the social insurance scheme there is written:

"When the new scheme is in operation it will be for the nation to respond by a fresh outburst of that creative energy which has marked the greatest periods of our history and is vitally necessary in the years now before us."

"Bread and circuses" were symptomatic of the decline and fall of Rome. The pessimists between the wars would have had us believe that "dole and dogs" were the modern counterpart. German propaganda termed us decadent and effete. We have proved that not for the first time has Germany failed to understand the spiritual resources of this island people. The challenge is to maintain into the post-war years those high levels of national unselfishness and vision and dedication that have brought us thus far, else all that has been fought and died for will have been in vain.

After 50 Years of Progress, Rural Districts Face Future with Confidence

By NEVILLE HOBSON, M.C., J.P., Clerk to Beverley R.D.C., and Vice-Chairman, Rural District Councils' Association

The Rural District Councils celebrate this year the fiftieth anniversary of their creation. In this article, Mr. Hobson surveys their record of achievement and submits a strong claim for their continuance as the embodiment of rural democracy.

IN the year 1894, Parliament granted to rural England and Wales a heritage they have now enjoyed for fifty years, which must never be denied to them—the right of democratic self-government.

For centuries, many boroughs had operated varying forms of local control under Charters, frequently purchased from impecunious monarchs, but the general organisation of the municipalities was not regulated until the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, which was extended by the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882.

The county councils were created in 1888, when various powers previously exercised by justices in quarter sessions, together with other responsibilities, were taken over by them. The larger boroughs were made independent of the new administrative counties and termed county boroughs, with a still greater degree of independence.

Unlike the older towns, the rural areas had been too sparsely populated to permit of convenient administration. The Local Government Act, 1894, solved their problem by combining groups of parishes (modelled on earlier sanitary areas) and merging them into bodies corporate, known as rural district councils, with perpetual succession. The representatives of these new units of local government were to be appointed by the parochial electors, now termed local government electors under the Representation of the People Acts.

Wide Range of Duties

The main powers entrusted to the rural district councils concerned highways and public health. When highways were transferred to the county councils in 1929, there was temporary uncertainty as to the effect on the rural authorities. By that date, however, public opinion had begun to recognise the need for improved housing and public health services, and the minutes of rural councils to-day demonstrate the wide range of duties they now undertake—over an area comprising nearly four-fifths of England and Wales and containing one-sixth of the total population.

The main functions of the modern rural district council are housing, building byelaws, water supplies, sewerage, sewage disposal, refuse collection, milk and meat inspections, slaughterhouses, valuation and rating, and local planning. It is instructive to examine what has been done in some of these directions.

Housing. During the twenty years before the outbreak of war, more than 870,000 houses (sufficient for a population of 4,000,000) were built in rural England and Wales. Of these the councils themselves built 163,000, and an additional 133,000 were built with the aid of grants from them. The remainder were erected by private enterprise, under the supervision and control of the rural councils, operating appropriate byelaws.

Water Supplies. Before September, 1939, piped water supplies had been provided in more than 7,000 parishes in England and Wales ; and the rural councils spent more than £7,000,000 after the passing of the Rural Water Supplies Act, 1934, under which a timorous Treasury allocated £1,000,000 towards the fulfilment of this important enterprise.

Sewerage and Refuse Collection. In the pre-war period, sewerage schemes were carried out in an ever-increasing number of rural districts ; and it is estimated that 6,000 parishes (representing more than 70 per cent of the rural population) had been provided with sewers and adequate disposal arrangements. The ancillary service of refuse collection was also being extensively developed.

Milk and Meat Inspections. Although the relationship of rural councils to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (which has recently taken over the control of milk production) has not yet been precisely defined, the rural officials will, presumably, continue to be responsible for inspections of various kinds. Apart from the quality and condition of the milk itself, the supervision of dairies and cowsheds from a constructional point of view, with the incidental problems of drainage and water supplies, will be their direct concern.

Planning. The administrative changes at present under review are unlikely to interfere materially with the place of the rural district councils in the deliberations which are essential if local needs and circumstances are to be properly considered. In the past a number of rural councils have prepared schemes, or combined for this purpose with neighbouring authorities ; and before the war there were many joint committees on which the councils were directly represented.

Valuation and Rating. Valuation is now the subject of official discussions ; but, in addition to this responsibility, the rural councils have large sums to collect in rates on behalf both of themselves and of the county councils. The latter precept upon the rural authorities which ultimately pay into the county rate fund anything from 70 to 80 per cent of the total collected from their ratepayers. It is not generally realised that the rural districts of England and Wales have a rateable value of more than £35,000,000 and that the total rates they collect exceed £18,000,000.

The Great Hold-up

Few local authorities were hit more seriously by the war than were the rural councils. They had struggled hard to persuade successive governments that their districts must receive substantial help from the Exchequer to enable them to launch a sustained housing crusade ; but it was not until 1938 that adequate legislation was passed.

By the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act of that year, increased subsidies were granted for rural housing, and the eighteen months before September, 1939, were marked by much preliminary effort. But the building of 500 houses in a scattered rural district is a very different proposition from the building of the same number in a compact municipality. In the latter, one or two sites are negotiated and the appropriate planning agreed ; and the remaining problems are relatively straightforward, since water, sewerage, and electricity can be readily and economically provided. In a typical rural district of up to 25,000 inhabitants, however, the 500 houses have to be built on twenty to thirty different sites, each with its separate negotiations, lay-out, and incidental services, all involving complex problems and inevitable delays.

The declaration of war put a stop to this housing programme, and to many water, sewerage and refuse collection schemes. Rural planning was similarly held up.

The primary value of the rural district, however, is as an expression of rural democracy. It is necessary to emphasise this because of the blindness of many in our cities and towns who appreciate the significance of democracy in their own congested areas but fail to recognise its true place in rural England and Wales. The municipalities have their people close together, many have enjoyed earlier forms of local government, and the administrative machine functions within a ring fence. One water undertaking and one comprehensive sewerage scheme will often suffice for a large population. The residents live near the elected representatives and officials, they have the advantage of a local press, and their rateable value is concentrated.

Among the non-county boroughs (of which no fewer than 50 have populations under 5,000) a sense of higher status is sometimes accentuated by the possession of a robed mayor and a town clerk with wig and gown. All these factors, coupled with lack of knowledge of rural conditions, tend to create a feeling of possessiveness on the part of certain types of town dwellers. Meanwhile, adjoining rural districts, often with greater populations and financial resources, function unostentatiously amid unappreciated difficulties, without the insignia and limelight which stimulate the towns.

The rural communities have precisely the same right of self-government as their municipal colleagues ; and proposals for nebulous delegation or limited co-option are no substitute for the right to *govern*—which is implied in the term "local government."

Village Loyalty

Though they cannot always attain to the borough standard of intensive self-expression, there is a great wealth of loyalty, keenness, and idealism in thousands of villages throughout England and Wales. These qualities, unspoiled by the subtleties of internal politics, are among the nation's greatest assets and must be preserved. In many parts of the country, each isolated parish must, in many respects, be a self-contained and independent unit of administration, and must not be peremptorily tacked on to a neighbouring borough or urban district.

It is essential, if the principles of democracy are to be honoured, that the rural parishes shall have their own elected representatives on an appropriate district council, operating from a centre convenient of access, and possessing officials with whom they can maintain ready and personal contact.

No responsible person would argue that the officials of the larger authorities, or of Whitehall, would be inherently incapable of administering certain of the rural services ; but such administration would not be democracy, nor would it be local government. These are the objectives for which rural England and Wales contend. They have contributed many of their sons to fight for democratic freedom, and they would regard any fundamental undermining of the parochial and district status granted by Parliament 50 years ago as a denial of that freedom.

Moreover, the men and women engaged in agriculture have worked throughout the war at a greater pressure than those of almost any other industry ; and they have laboured with a complete absence of those strikes and threats of national sabotage which have tainted many of our main centres of population.

It is sometimes inferred that rural councils are the least important type of local authority.

It is relevant, therefore, to record that, of the 476 rural district councils, only 129 have fewer than 10,000 inhabitants; whereas of the 572 urban district councils there are 282 below this population, while of the really small units, 137 urban districts, but only 29 rural districts, have populations below 5,000.

These figures may indicate the desirability of a limited measure of amalgamation or reconstruction (with increased financial and staffing efficiency); and there is a strong case for the improvement of the existing machinery both for normal county reviews and for the adjustment of the boundaries of administrative counties and county boroughs. Any modification of present legislation must, however, safeguard the democratic traditions and rights of the county districts.

Many of the larger municipalities will be faced with such a range of problems after the war that they should leave the rural areas to manage their own affairs. Numerous boroughs and urban districts are themselves lacking in modern standards of housing and planning, and many existing water and sewerage undertakings will need drastic overhaul. If they were to attempt to administer large tracts of the countryside jointly with their existing areas, their representatives would quickly find their way to Whitehall to plead for Exchequer assistance.

Let the rural communities make their own peace with the Treasury and the Ministry of Health, with the latter of which they have established amicable and constructive relationships—thus proving that a genuine partnership is practicable between Whitehall (when controlled by officials of understanding and democratic vision) and the elected representatives of rural England and Wales.

Town and Country

The question of diversity of interest between town and country cannot be answered by generalisations. Those whose conception of rural life is based upon the neighbourhood of London and other large aggregations of population (with their satellite and "dormitory" units, and the spread-over of light industries) may urge that the rural and urban outlook and problems are, to a substantial degree, assimilated. This, however, is not the case in the majority of rural counties, where urban development is relatively small. It is often overlooked that the agricultural areas of England and Wales contain more than two-thirds of the total acreage of our country, but that this wide expanse contains villages of an average population of 300-500 only. The work and interests of these hard-working communities are bound up with agriculture; and, even in normal times, the limited transport services and the insistent demands of this specialised and seasonal industry negative any sustained community of interest with the larger towns. Moreover, any extensive merger with such centres would gravely reduce their existing allocation of rural representatives (even small parishes having, at present, one councillor); and would materially curtail the personal rights they have enjoyed since 1894. These observations do not necessarily apply to the market town with a small population, whose interests are almost exclusively agricultural.

Since, however, the normal type of rural district (with its distinctive way of life and outlook, which will be accentuated by the increase, after the war, of village halls and community centres) must be maintained, it should not be stripped of its more important parishes, even though near a growing borough or urban district; it must be left with sufficient functions and resources to attract the best type of councillor and official. The more populous and industrialised rural districts

(Continued in next column)

must also be protected and their traditions and wishes respected. Many of these are already powerful units of local government.

This summary of the history and progress of rural district councils must conclude with an assurance that they are fully alive to their post-war responsibilities. Rural England and Wales need many services which have hitherto been impracticable, particularly in those areas where the villages are widely scattered and their populations small.

Help and encouragement will be needed, but the rural authorities believe that they have the goodwill of the Minister of Health, who recently expressed the view that "the rural district councils are sometimes spoken of with inadequate appreciation and respect." The rural communities have for generations contributed greatly to the well-being of the nation, which will continue to need their stabilising influence. They will welcome co-operation with the county councils and other bodies; but they will demand the rights of independent partners, and will not be satisfied with the precarious status of subordinate agents.

After all, their people are more directly interested in the welfare and development of the rural areas than anyone else; and they will face the future with vigour and confidence, so long as a genuine heritage of freedom is left to them and provided successive Governments honour the pledges which, under the stress of war, have been given. If, however, agriculture is allowed to slump under the weight of imports from the Dominions and our Allies (with whom inter-trading must be encouraged if exports are to be maintained), this confidence, and the strength it begets, may well abate, for vision and enthusiasm cannot be the concomitants of threatened impoverishment or insolvency.

Inasmuch, however, as the rural communities retain their faith in the foresight and balanced outlook of British statesmanship, and cling to the belief that their fellow-countrymen have no desire to disfranchise or disrupt them, they will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their accession to self-government with feelings of gratitude for the past and sustained hope and determination for the future.

Plymouth's Bold Vision of a Brave New World

LONDON, Coventry, now Plymouth—the picture of our brave new world as planned by the blitzed but far from discouraged cities of Britain is taking inspiring shape. It is significant, indeed, that the finest plans are coming from the most devastated areas; destruction evidently providing that release from the crabbing influences of tradition, timidity and vested interest which is essential if planning is to be bold and ambitious.

Bold and ambitious, Plymouth's vision certainly is. But what better object of ambition than to build cities that are beautiful, healthy, and pleasant to live in?

Plymouth's plan, prepared by the city engineer and surveyor, Mr. J. Paton Watson, in consultation with Mr. Patrick Abercrombie, is embodied in an exhibition which, after being seen by 40,000 people in Plymouth, was recently on view in London. The exhibition itself is a work of art. Colour, symbols, diagrams, and models have all been employed to bring out salient points with great clarity and skill. There is first-rate planning and beautiful workmanship in every exhibit.

Each section shows clearly the aims of reconstruction, defined by Lord Astor, Plymouth's lord mayor, as to "repair past errors in lay-out due to haphazard growth" and to "create a Plymouth worthy of its historic fame and its marvellous site."

This new Plymouth will be a city convenient for shopping, for recreation, for living, and at the same time spacious and beautiful. At its heart will be the Civic Centre housing the Guildhall and other civic buildings, set amid spacious gardens with trees and fountains from which traffic will be excluded. On the seaward side of the Civic Centre will be theatres and banks with, beyond, hotels and residential areas fronting the famous Hoe. To the landward side is a magnificent shopping centre with broad avenues, again barred to through traffic, leading to a new station.

Outside this centre area lie what are now overcrowded districts which must be "zoned," thinned out, provided with good roads and open spaces. Here it is proposed to build inner and outer ring roads with new bridges giving access to Cornwall and to the fruit and vegetable growing areas outside the town, now almost cut off from it except by railway.

Most pressing problem, of course, is the rehousing of the people—likely to be aggravated if the Admiralty carries out its proposal to expand the dockyard over a further 240 acres, now one of the most densely populated areas of the city. At least 30,000 new houses will be needed and about 40,000 people will have to be moved out. This cannot be done without an overspill into the surrounding region—and it is this which prompted the "Plymouth amendment" to the Town and Country Planning Bill last month.

Recognising the disintegration of social life and the destruction of civic awareness and responsibility which is all too often a result of the growth of cities, Plymouth plans to build its new residential areas on a "neighbourhood" plan, and to redesign existing areas so that they too may enjoy communal unity. Each "neighbourhood unit" will have a population of between 5,000 and 6,000, set around church, schools, shops and amusements, and each unit, where possible, will be surrounded by open space. Industry will be "zoned" in special districts, thus taking much heavy traffic out of residential areas, and the proposed ring roads will take away through traffic, so that the "neighbourhood units" will become safe, quiet, and peaceful.

Plymouth's plan should be shown in every town in the country, both as a symbol of the national resurgence we all hope to find after this war, and still more as practical proof of the fact that, given vision and imagination, a modern, commercial, industrial and seaport town can be beautiful and good to live in. Plymouth's City Fathers have shown that they possess those qualities. If they can translate their bold conception into bricks and mortar, they will prove themselves worthy successors to the Pilgrim Fathers who set sail from their quays to found a new world.

Macclesfield's Plan

ANOTHER town to get ahead with its reconstruction plans is Macclesfield. Though less ambitious than Plymouth's, the plans, prepared by Mr. Dobson Chapman, provide for extensive clearance of the centre of the town, diversion of through traffic by a ring road, a new industrial estate, and the provision of civic and cultural centres, shopping and business areas, and more open space.

One point, however, arouses misgiving. A foreword to the published plan advises the reader to ignore the illustrative sketches, since, in the buildings eventually put up, "there would be no stifling either of private enterprise or the expression of individuality within reason." Is it not precisely that "expression of individuality" which has produced the chaos of most of our towns today—a chaos against which the phrase "within reason" hardly provides adequate safeguard?

e trouble to get in touch with anyone connected th the White Paper presented to the Minister of ıel and Power, he would not condemn the ectricity Commissioners for something for which ay are not responsible.

Municipal electricity undertakings can be justly oud of their record.

Bingley. O. G. COOK.
Chief Electrical Engineer and Manager.

HE FUTURE FOR WOMEN

ıblic Health Their Sphere

WAS very interested in P. E. Wooderson's article under the heading "Public Health Has penings" in the October Journal.

For more than 18 years I have been chief clerk the public health department in this borough aving had 8 years' experience previously in the easurer's department). I have always been nvinced that the work of this department is pecially suited to women, having regard to the er-changing, and ever-increasing work connected th women and children, and the school medical rvices.

I should be glad to know of any other women ho are carrying out this work, without the assistıce of men, and also whether they are being itably recompensed.

Neath GWLADYS M. HOPKINS.

ould They Transfer to Teaching ?

WOMEN are urged to take their places in the new Britain which is to be built after e war. This is excellent, but how ? How are omen, whose normal education ceased when ey were 16 or 17, and who were sent to earn eir living as shorthand-typists, clerks, etc., some n or so years ago, to obtain training for the ore responsible and less mundane posts which ey are told are open to them ?

The great need for more school teachers is conıntly being stressed. But how can a woman ford to leave her present post for, say, 12 onths to two years, keeping herself and paying er fees during this long period without aid ? there no State-aided scheme for L.G.O.s ho wish to take up teaching ? Many women ho have been in local government service for a w years would probably be most suitable achers (after a period of intensive training). hey have a wider knowledge of life than their ounger sisters now entering training colleges at 8 ; but teaching is not a career an older woman ould consider unless she were convinced that ne could succeed in this most important task of raining future citizens.

Can anyone give information of training possiilities and also whether contributions to the superannuation scheme could be transferred ?

"WOULD-BE TEACHER."

Equal Opportunity the Key

MAY I add a sprig to the bouquet which I am sure the sponsors of your "Women's Number" have received from their gratified readers. It was a most interesting and provocative issue.

Naturally much space was given to the discussion of "Equal Pay." Should this claim be allowed, however, would it be of any *practical* value to women unless and until "*Equal Opportunity*" was recognised and established ? Were equal opportunity obtained, would not the present question of equal pay then settle itself ? And if so, should not the claim for "Equal Opportunity" be substituted for "Equal Pay" ?

"RANK AND FILE."

Equal Pay "Too Drastic"

EQUAL pay for women is one of the most difficult questions we have to face. The major point is, how many women will be permanently engaged after the war, and, are their services necessary ? Men will be returning to their jobs, and it is to be hoped that no women will be retained who would prevent the men outside who are looking for work from getting a job.

We must look at the question from outside our service, too. It is a national matter. Some forms of women's work do not warrant high rates of pay and can often be performed without much intelligence, but they should not be lowly paid jobs. That would be classed as sweated labour. The domestic side must not be forgotten, also the possibility of equal pay causing fewer marriages. The best way would be to improve women's rates of pay all over the country—but never equal them with a man's rate. That is far too drastic a proposal.

Croydon. L. J. BARNES.

BUILDING AN "A 1" NATION

Is Britain a "C 3 Apology" ?

I READ with amazement in the October journal Mr. Shults' statement that while the Germans are renowned for their physical prowess, we British are merely a "C 3 Apology" for a nation.

Well ! Well ! To think our poor C 3 Army chased those hulking great German Supermen across Africa from Alamein to Tunis, and from Caen to Holland and the Reich Frontiers ! As for our fragile, weakling Air Force, it must be nearly exhausted from its puny efforts since the Battle of Britain against the mighty A 1 Luftwaffe ! Somehow our C 3 Navy (in which I see Mr. Shults holds commissioned rank) has managed to keep our shores safe and our supply lines open ! As for the rest of this C 3 nation, long hours, plain rations, bombs, shells, and "doodle-bugs," must surely have undermined its

"I want 'im 'umanised, Miss"

already weak constitution, yet, strange as it may seem to Mr. Shults, the old country is still on her feet, even after a five year struggle against the A 1 Aryans !

Mr. Shults has suggested that we might do well to take a leaf from the Germans' book if we are to become a nation of Supermen. The thought occurs to me that at this moment the German Supermen might like a few easy lessons on how to become C 3 !

100, Westbourne Road, G. L. FOX.
Bedford.

NO PENSIONS INCREASE

The Reward of Thrift

WHEN I entered the municipal service a long time ago there was no pension scheme, so in order to escape the workhouse I began to save. This self-denial has put me outside the £300 limit of the Pensions Increase Act, yet if I were still in the service I should get my war bonus without any inquiry as to my private means.

Could anything be more illogical or unfair ?

RETIRED OFFICIAL.

RIGHT TO RETIRE

Let Service Decide It, Not Age

I HAVE no objection to the wish expressed by "London Member" in the October journal, but if the footnote stating that N A L G O is seeking an amendment of the Local Government Superannuation Acts to provide for the right of an officer to retire at 60, irrespective of years of service, correctly indicates the decision of the National Executive Council, I sincerely hope they will think again !

In face of proposals under Beveridge and Social Security for a retiring age of 65 *or later*, what chance is there for a general reduction to 60, *irrespective of years of service ?*

One of the weaknesses of our Act is its failure to recognise length of service, as a result of which hundreds who came into local government late in life have been able to clear out in 10-25 years with substantial pensions, leaving those who entered as boys to complete perhaps 45 years of service and pay contributions for practically the whole of their official lives.

Surely, before any amendment to the Superannuation Acts is proposed, further consideration should be given to this important aspect, with a view to long-service members having the opportunity of retirement after 35, or even 30 years, *irrespective of age*, as in other forms of national service. NORTHERN.

DANGEROUS WORK, BUT NO PENSION

A Radiographer's Plight

HAVING read the article by "Technician" —"L.G.O.s, Who Turn Teacher Lose Pensions," I am prompted to draw attention to my case, although it is not parallel with his.

I am a radiographer. I started X-ray work in 1905, when little was known of its dangers. Most of the pioneers have since died as a result of long hours in unsuspectedly risky work. In my own case, an X-ray burn developed on my right arm in 1919 ; fortunately it did not prove serious, because at that time I was doing more teaching, and did not need to expose myself constantly to the rays.

In 1924, I took up an appointment at a voluntary hospital. When the hospital committee was forced to bring its nurses and staff into the superannuation scheme, I was told that my salary of £275 p.a., was so high that the committee could not afford to include me.

I left for more money, and at the age of 59 have taken up an appointment with a borough council from whom, of course, I cannot expect a pension. The voluntary hospital authorities were at fault, and as a result, although I have spent a lifetime on dangerous and important work for the benefit of humanity, I have no decent pension to give my wife, who has had to face the prospects of my falling a victim to X-rays, nor may I look forward to a few years of retired pleasure. Does not this sort of thing need adjusting ?

"X-RAY TECHNICIAN."

AN EMBARRASSING ECONOMY

Open Envelope Notification

I HAVE just been notified of the successful candidate for a post for which I applied—in an open envelope. Since the envelope was opened inadvertently by someone who thought it was an account, I am likely to be embarrassed should the news reach certain quarters. Can something be done to stop this unmannerly practice ?

"APPLICANT."

How N A L G O Helps Members

THE value of the Association's free legal aid for its members is further illustrated by successful libel actions taken recently.

An evening newspaper published articles suggesting that a senior school attendance officer had shown special favour in the case of his nephew who had been charged with stealing money, and linking the name of a city psychologist with a reference to "unqualified quacks and mumbo-jumbo merchants."

Both officers sought N A L G O's aid, and when the newspaper refused to make suitable reparation writs for libel were issued. Both cases were settled, the newspaper publishing full apologies to each officer and paying their costs, plus £50 damages to the school attendance officer and £100 damages to the psychologist.

Yorkshire Weekend School

"LOCAL Government Tomorrow" was the theme of a successful weekend school, organised by the Yorkshire district education subcommittee, at Bingley Training College on August 5 and 6, and attended by about eighty students, and by Mr. A. A. Garrard, president of N A L G O and Ald. John Ratcliffe, of Halifax, vice-chairman of the Yorkshire provincial council.

Bernard Kenyon, clerk of the West Riding county council, lecturing on local government reconstruction, favoured adaptation of the existing system, by meeting new problems as they arise, rather than a complete overhaul of machinery already working satisfactorily.

J. L. Holland, secretary for education, Northamptonshire, surveyed the new Education Act, while doubting whether we should achieve all at which it aimed. The teaching profession would have to be made more attractive to secure the 75,000 more teachers needed.

Dr. Nicolas Gebbie, medical officer of health of Kingston-upon-Hull, explained the government's plan for national health service, approving the spreading of hospital services over larger areas, and supporting the proposed joint boards. But the "curative" policy of the White Paper was insufficient, and more attention should be given to "social" medicine.

Weston Branch Plans the "City Beautiful": More P. R. Successes : A Forces' Tribute

By "ABINGDON"

READERS may remember that exciting article in the May Journal, in which Councillor T. W. R. Procter, chairman of the Weston-super-Mare reconstruction committee, described how his council had exemplified its faith in democracy by extending an open invitation to all organisations and individuals in the town to submit their own views on its reconstruction and development. It has had an exciting sequel. The Weston-super-Mare branch of N A L G O decided to accept the invitation. It appointed a strong committee of seven under the branch president to prepare a report. That report has been approved by the branch executive and has now been published—to the extent of 4½ columns—in the local papers. And in a leading article,one paper has acclaimed it as "the finest reconstruction report yet . . . as thorough in detail as in its broad vision."

The report amounts to a 25-year plan. Seeing Weston-super-Mare as the "kingpin" of a wide area of North Somerset, it advocates its expansion, by voluntary amalgamation with neighbouring authorities, into an "all-purpose authority" of 100,000 population and £1,000,000 rateable value. It wants to see this area planned as a whole, with satellite towns, a protected countryside, and full development of amenities. Under the plan, Weston-super-Mare itself will have a big civic centre, to house the administrative offices (including the local offices of Government departments), central information and inquiry office, art gallery, and public assembly hall; a civic theatre and conference hall (home of a municipal orchestra and music, drama, ballet, and opera festivals); flower-lined boulevards; many more gardens and playing spaces; a central health clinic and maternity hospital; a young people's centre, bathing and boating pools, yachting harbour, sports stadium, racecourse, palm lounge, municipal cafes, concert halls, and a new library with study rooms and a sound-proof radio and television room. Housing plans include special provision for single persons, the newly married, families with children, and aged persons, community centres, and ample space for recreation.

Special mention is made of the need for a go-ahead public relations policy, measures suggested including a permanent local government exhibition, the publication of an annual municipal guide, lessons on local government in the schools, and more public seats in the council chamber.

The plan, as a writer in one local paper remarked, is for "a City Beautiful, with a beneficent corporation looking after the residents at every stage of their journey through life—in fact from the ante-natal clinic to the crematorium." Moreover its preparation has provided a first class example of public relations. Pointing out that most of those who prepared it are not chief officers, but the younger ones who will bear the burden of future administration, another paper adds: "If this is the way in which the up and coming generation of public servants is thinking the days of blind bureaucracy are nearly over . . . we cannot praise too highly the public spirit which has actuated . . . the local branch of N A L G O."

Local government officers in other areas must have many equally fine ideas for the improvement of their towns and countryside. Why not work them out and submit them to the local authority as the Weston branch has done?

As I write this comes news that **Eastbourne** branch has been invited by the town council to submit its views on the reconstruction of Eastbourne. Here, too, a special sub-committee is preparing a report. I hope it will have as fine a reception as Weston's has done.

Presidential Pilgrimage

DESPITE travelling difficulties, more branches and members are likely to see the Association's president this year than have ever done so before. As he promised he would do in his article in the July journal, Mr. Garrard has now retired from his official post as secretary for education at East Ham and proposes to devote most of his time during his presidential year to N A L G O, and to visit as many branches as he can. Already, I hear, his diary is being well booked up.

The tour began in August, with visits to **Harrogate, Liverpool,** and the **Yorkshire district** weekend school at Bingley, and since then the president has been heard in **South Wales, Barnet, Norwich,** and Norfolk. At Harrogate (where the local paper devoted the best part of a column to the occasion), Mr. Garrard clearly made a deep impression and struck many sparks of enthusiasm. Public relations was his major theme. He outlined the N.E.C. policy (described in detail in last month's journal) and commended it to branches. Public relations for local government must always be essentially local, and the policy can succeed only if branches will take it up and prosecute it with vigour. I trust that the president's advocacy will encourage them to do that.

APPROVED SOCIETY

Many members of the Approved Society have not yet sent their National Health Insurance cards to Headquarters. Members who fail to send their cards before November 30 may jeopardize their title to benefit during 1945.

Voluntary contributors are reminded that, under section 20(1) of the National Health Insurance Act, their contributions for the year ended July, 1944, must be received by the Approved Society not later than November 30, otherwise they will lose their right to continue as voluntary contributors and their membership will terminate at the end of the free insurance period.

Seeing the Wheels Go Round

MORE and more branches indeed, are taking it up with enthusiasm. Latest of which I have heard is **Colchester,** whose members have been taking parties from local youth organisations on conducted visits to such municipal enterprises as the electricity, sewage, and water works—all, according to the "Essex County Standard," "exceptionally well attended and appreciated by Colchester's future citizens." To carry on with the good work, the branch has now planned a series of "follow-up" lectures at which the young people, having seen the wheels go round, are told the how and why of their motion.

The Lecture Season

ONE of the pioneers of public relations—it was running an essay competition on local government for all local school children long before the war—is **Nelson** branch. Now it has launched a new venture—a series of 25 weekly lectures covering every branch of municipal activity, at the municipal technical school. In addition, HARRY EAVES, the branch P.R.O., tells me, the branch is booking special lectures for various citizen groups.

Stretford branch is, by now, an old hand, but refuses to rest on its last year's laurels. There, the P.R.O., R. CODD, has started off his winter season with a fascinating lecture by REESE EDWARDS, director of education, on the development of Intelligence in children, and a town and country planning exhibition. These are to be followed by three brains trusts, a film-illustrated lecture on local government by the town clerk, C. TREWAVAS, and lectures to local organisations. Nor are the town hall staff to be neglected; for them, Miss RHODES, education correspondent, is organising a staff brains trust, to be followed by lectures.

"Shadow Council" in the Limelight

I HAVE already mentioned **Newport's** "Shadow Council," organised for members of the civil defence services by IVOR JONES, C.D. welfare officer (and editor of the excellent "Newport N A L G O Newsletter"). It continues to arouse widespread civic interest among its members and, I hope, to flutter the municipal dovecotes. At a recent meeting—held, as before, in the council chamber with the chairman of the civil defence committee as "mayor"—it "voted" £200,000 for a cultural centre and museum; approved the provision of furnished "flatlets" and hostels for old people, and called for two bus centres and an airport (from which, one speaker suggested, council deputations might fly about their business).

In Fly-Bomb Alley

BRANCHES in the south-eastern district which shared the flying-bomb attacks so graphically described in the October journal, have not allowed that "diversion" to halt or to slacken their activities. ALAN PROCKTOR, south-eastern district officer, tells me that, since the district office was opened in January, members of the Southern Home Counties Province Council has risen from 28 to 71 authorities, a no fewer than 90 authorities have adopted t current Whitley bonus scale. Spectacular progre has been achieved in **Rye.** Although the bran is not yet one year old, it has persuaded t borough council to join the Provincial Counc supplement war service pay on the Bolton sca retrospectively to September, 1939, pay t current bonus with full arrears under the 19 scale, and adopt the provincial council's sala scales and sick pay scheme.

Eastbourne, too, has joined the provinc council and adopted its sick pay scheme, and improved scale of travelling allowances.

There is today not a single local authority the south-eastern district which is not supp menting the pay of officers on war service.

One Front Line to Another

OUR recent article describing the speed a efficiency with which local authorities a their staffs dealt with flying-bomb damage fin a pleasing echo in "Union Jack," the Arm newspaper. In a letter to the editor, Lt. W. York, of Base Censor Group, C.M.F., writes:

"One so often hears criticisms of loc government officials at home that it was ve gratifying to me to read in a letter from my w telling me our home in a suburb near Londo had been damaged by the blast from a flyi bomb: 'Then, so it seemed, from nowhere ca a host of willing workers, and we soon got ele of the worst of it.'

"The next day she wrote saying the windo had been covered and the council men had be to repair the roof.

"I thought this might be of some consolati to those, who, like me, must be concerned as the welfare of their folk at home."

A Chance for Warriors

While it is N A L G O policy—supported b the National Whitley Council—that all wa time appointments should be temporary, loc authorities do sometimes find difficulty in appl ing this policy to senior vacancies. As next be thing, I commend the example of Epsom a Ewell borough council. Its town clerk, P. Whiteoak Cooper, is retiring in February. Th council has advertised the vacancy (at a salary £1,300—£1,600) but has deliberately postpone the last date for applications to January 1, give time for men now in the Forces to appl Mr. Whiteoak Cooper tells me that he will glad give all information to members who write him at the town hall, Epsom.

"Citizen's Choice"

MESSRS. ARROWSMITH, 12, Small Stree Bristol, publishers of "Citizens' Choice, E. Dixon Grubb's popular book reviewed in th January journal and since mentioned in a bran circular, tell me that they have now brought o a cloth-bound edition at 3s. 6d. The origin paper-bound edition at 2s. 6d. is still availab and when ordering members should, therefor say which they want.

Congratulations to—

A. S. BROUGHTON, deputy town clerk **Blackburn,** on his appointment as deputy cler **Northampton** C.C.

Councillor J. E. GEE, former medical offic of health for Lancashire county, founder an first secretary of the Lancs county branch, an for many years a member of N A L G O's N.E.C on his nomination as mayor of Preston.

J. HAWCROFT, borough surveyor of **Kidde minster,** and a former secretary and president the branch and member of the district committe and provincial council, on his retirement.

J. H. HOLT, secretary of the **Burnley** branc since 1925, a member of its executive and of th district committee since the branch was forme in 1919, and before that a member of the mun cipal officers' guild since its formation in 190 on his retirement after more than 50 year service.

Two members of the National Executi Council—D. J. OSBORNE, formerly deputy tow clerk of **Barnsley,** on his appointment as tow clerk of **Leyton**; and H. Taylor, formerly depu town clerk of **Stoke-on-Trent,** on his appointmen as town clerk of that town.

W. PIGGOTT, assistant town clerk of **Wand worth,** on his retirement after 42 years' service.

Miss E. S. WATTS, superintendent, Sheffiel blind welfare department since 1927, and th first woman to work in Sheffield town hall (wha she entered in 1908), on her retirement.

NALGO ROLL OF HONOUR

H.M. Forces

KILLED OR DIED ON SERVICE

Abraham, Sgt. D. F., R.A.O.C., clerk's dept., Newport, I.O.W.
Anderson, Cpl. A. L., 8th K.R.I. Hussars, finance dept., Westminster.
Anderson, Pte. T. G., 22, R.A.M.C., chamberlain's dept., Paisley.
Ardley, P./O. C. G., R.A.F., electricity dept., Hammersmith.
Baythorpe, P./O./Nvgtr. A. J., 20, R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Barrow.
Busby, Sgt./Obs. D. G., R.A.F., electricity dept., Hastings.
Coker, Tpr. C. E., surveyor's dept., Esher.
Cole, Lt. J. F., R.A., education dept., Surrey C.C.
Colley, L./Cpl. C., Fife and Forfar Yeomanry, taxation dept., Cheshire C.C.
Dean, F./O. J. W. F., R.A.F., Shaw Heath Institution, Stockport.
Donald, Lt. A. P., assistance dept., Aberdeen.
Drury, F./Lt. H., 32, R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Darlington.
Fawcett, Sgt./Nvgtr. J. C., R.A.F., accountant's dept., Westmorland C.C.
Fleming, Sqdr./Sgt./Maj. R., R.A.C., treasurer's dept., Batley.
Gillham, Lt. P. E., Recce Corps., health dept., Croydon.
Leah, F./O. E., R.A.F., joint omnibus committee, Todmorden.
Mitchell, Actg./Capt. K., health dept., Consett.
Morgan, Lt. S., Light Cavalry, engineer's dept., Hackney.
Robinson, Lt. P. D., R.M.C., libraries dept., Hunts C.C.
Smith, Sgt./P. A. J., 21, R.A.F.V.R., surveyor's dept., Letchworth.
Smith, Flt./Sgt. J. S., R.A.F., libraries dept., Wolverhampton.
Watts, Pte. R. A., R.E., collector's dept., Swanscombe (reported killed by aerial bombardment while in captivity).
Watts, S./A., R.N., surveyor's dept., Swindon.
Wire, Dvr. R. E., R.A.S.C., clerk's dept., West Ham.
Wyatt, Sgt. E. G., 23, R.A.F., health dept., Twickenham.

MISSING

Allison, Sgt./P. G. S., Glider Pilot Regt., clerk's dept., Surbiton.
Archibald, P./O. J. S., R.A.F., engineer's dept., Dunbarton C.C.
Bennett, F./O. A., R.A.F., collector's dept., Standish-with-Langtree U.D. (presumed killed).
Burnuck, Sgt./Obs. B., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Newport, Mon. (presumed killed).
Carmer, K., R.A.F., health dept., Hove.
Carland, F./O. G. F., 29, R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Ealing (presumed killed).
Carner, Sgt. W. G. C., R.A.F., electricity dept., Battersea.
Gilroy, Sgt./Flt./Eng. C., 20, weights and measures dept., Darlington (presumed killed).
Hall, R., clerk's dept., Sedgefield.
Hardy, Sgt./Nvgtr. D., R.A.F., libraries dept., West Ham.
Hollis, F./O. H. O., R.A.F.V.R., assistant relieving officer, Liverpool.
Hurst, Pte. J. H. T., Sherwood Foresters, libraries dept., Long Eaton.
Laycock, F./O. D., 22, R.A.F., clerk's dept., Urmston.
McGuire, Sgt. G., 23, R.A.F., chamberlain's dept., Paisley.
Manning, Sgt. A. W., R.A.F., weights and measures dept., Hunts. C.C.
Mason, Flt./Lt. C. V., R.A.F.V.R., clerk's dept., Leeds.
Rowland, Sgt./P. J. J., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Surrey C.C.
Secretan, Sgt. P. D., R.A.F., depot office, Hampstead.
Smith, Sgt. M. S., R.A.F., rating and valuation dept., Hove.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Bicknell, Flt./Sgt. C. A., 23, R.A.F., surveyor's dept., Twickenham.
Budd, Lt. P. M., Fd. Sqn., R.E., engineer and surveyor's dept., Derby (in Germany).
Cox, Tpr. K. V., R.A.C., electricity dept., Torquay (in Germany).
Jeffries, Flt./Sgt./Nvgtr. A. A., 23, R.A.F., clerk's dept., Darlington.
Maddin, Smn. A. W., R.N., treasurer's dept., Islington.
Mountfort, Maj. K., 35, Paratroops, assistant solicitor, Twickenham.
Potts, Glider/P. J. D., R.A.F., libraries dept., Wolverhampton.
Walkins, P./O. P., 31, R.A.F., libraries dept., Twickenham.

† *Previously reported prisoner.*
* *Previously reported missing.*

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

D.F.C.

Bacon, Flt./Lt. L., R.A.F., accountant's dept., Newport, I.O.W.—wounded in the action for which the decoration was awarded.

Galloway, Flt./Lt. J., D.F.M., R.A.F., Darlington—"most of his sorties have been against the most difficult and hazardous targets; his skill as a navigator has been outstanding, and his coolness and courage under most arduous and dangerous circumstances highly commendable."

Johnson, F./O. S., R.A.F., cleansing dept., Bradford—for conspicuous gallantry.

Riley, Flt./Lt. H. D., R.A.F., electricity dept., Bromley.

Robinson, S./Ldr., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Wembley.

Wright, Act./Flt./Lt. H. C., R.A.F., Acton—"this officer has taken part in many operations in which he has displayed high skill, fortitude, and devotion to duty."

D.F.M.

Bevan, Flt./Sgt. J. V., R.A.F., rates dept., Merthyr Tydfil—for gallantry and devotion to duty in the face of the enemy.

G.M.

Swinson, Lt. W., R.E., health dept., Fulham For conspicuous gallantry in carrying out his work in a very brave manner.

MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES

Aldridge, L./A./C. D. F., R.A.F., libraries dept., Gloucester.

Bryar, Warrant/O. L. C., 24, R.E.M.E., treasurer's dept., Twickenham.

Clarke, Maj. R. M., R.A., clerk's dept., Westminster—for gallant and distinguished service in Italy.

Harris, Maj. R. T., G.C., R.E., engineer's dept., Croydon.

Keys, Temp. Sub./Lt. K., R.N.V.R., treasurer's dept., Newcastle-upon-Tyne—for gallantry and devotion to duty in the landings on D-Day (posthumous award).

Leng, Sgt. H., R.A.S.C., treasurer's dept., Castleford—for gallantry and distinguished service in Italy, in August, 1944.

Melville, F./O. D., R.A.F., Irlam—for distinguished services in Malta.

Pethick, Sub./Lt. H. W., F.A.A., treasurer's dept., Torquay—for gallantry in two attacks on the "Tirpitz."

Pontifex, A.B., E. R., R.N., cleansing dept., Wembley—for gallantry and good service.

I Walked 700 Miles to Freedom—But Britain Has a Longer Trek

By Lt. RONALD MANN (North'land Hussars), Lancs. C.C.

I AM back from a trek of over 700 miles across Europe—escaping from the prison camp where the first part of my military career ended.

A few months ago I was in the heart of enemy-occupied territory; fortunately among friendly people. I should like to tell you how I came to be there, and of the adventures I had, including close shaves with the Germans—sometimes living in the same village. But that must wait until after the war.

One typical day I remember. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon and we were sitting on the top of a mountain between four and five thousand feet high. Below lay a narrow valley; all around mountains with rocky tops and densely wooded slopes. In the bottom of the valley, scattered on the sides of the mountains, and even sometimes on the peaks were clusters of white specks, surrounded by patches of varied colour. These were villages, surrounded by their cultivated land. With the risk of capture constantly in mind, we picked out one that seemed well away from the roads and high in the hills, lying on our route as judged by the sun, our only compass and clock.

Presently, we climbed down the mountain-side, our sweat-soaked shirts drying on our backs. After many discreet inquiries of friendly peasants, we discovered the best place to cross the road and river at the bottom of the valley and at last reached the village we'd chosen, first making sure that there were no Germans or spies about. In the village we stopped the first man we met and asked him where we could stay for the night. Avoiding a direct answer, he first questioned us closely. Once convinced that we were not spies, he invited us to his home.

It was a small house, built of rubble. The man's wife met us at the kitchen door. She was a wiry woman with a brown, lined face and kind eyes, and was dressed in black clothes, almost rags. She asked us to come in and warm ourselves, and poured an embarrassing amount of sympathy on us.

One of the first questions was "Are you hungry?" We were waiting for that, and when we answered in a definite affirmative, we were asked to gather round a table. Spread out all over it was a layer of steaming maize about half an inch thick, covered with a thin layer of tomato-garlic-cheese flavouring. We were each given a fork, and with the rest of the family ate our way towards the centre of the table.

After the meal, as we sat around the wood fire, the peasant and his wife told us stories of oppression and of shortage of food and clothes. "When are the English coming?" they kept asking as they told us story after story. Many were of increasing graft and mistrust through the years, and we were especially interested in those about local administration. Whilst the country had made some material progress, its local government had become completely corrupt.

Whilst working in local government in England, I had never seriously thought about its foundations or its future. But what the peasants had been telling us opened my eyes. I began to see how jealousy of position, inter-departmental strife, and unwillingness to work in harmony with other members of the staff or the council, was the kind of thing that undermines the foundations of a nation's life.

In the desert army there had been a spirit that was unforgettable. It was not merely that these men had learned to handle guns and tanks, but that somewhere out of the past they had recaptured the spirit and tradition of England—the tradition of teamwork, straight dealing, and faith in God. There we had a rich comradeship and a spirit of give and daring that was big enough to beat the Germans and that could be mobilised to build a better world. That is the spirit that will not only drive the Germans out of occupied Europe, but drive out of the people of Europe the ideas that are enemies of democracy—ideas of soft living, indulgence, dishonesty and "every man for himself."

But when we returned to England, I saw that even here alien ideas have a foothold. Like paratroops in the night, fear, hate, dishonesty, and greed have slipped into our homes, our industries, our communities. The battle line is between the selfish and divisive forces on the one hand and the spirit of sacrifice and team-work—still the backbone of our British way of life—on the other.

It took me six months to walk 700 miles back to freedom. It is going to take all of us, you and me, Forces and civilians alike, everything we've got for the rest of our lives to fight and win this war of ideas.

Women are Ready for Responsibility —Let us Give it to Them!

By ANGELA GAYWOOD, NALGO Women's Organiser

DURING the next two months most NALGO branches will be holding their annual general meetings and electing their representatives to branch executive and district committees. Shall we see this time more women serving on these bodies?

Many branches have formed women's sub-committees in the past year. All have the same aims—to train women members for more active work for the Association, to encourage them to co-operate more fully with their male colleagues, to watch the position of women in the local government service, and to teach them the value of unity and organisation.

Most of these women's sub-committees have already demonstrated their value, dealing with such matters as salary scales, regrading, equal bonus and equal pay, service conditions, recruitment of women officers, especially temporaries, social activities (often for the Benevolent and Orphan Fund), the provision of adequate toilet and rest rooms, and the difficult problem of recruiting nurses.

The last they have sometimes tackled even when it meant neglecting more urgent personal problems. They have approached medical superintendents, matrons, nurses, public health officers, and midwives; they have organised meetings to gather in the recruits, and they have maintained contact with units formed in hospitals and institutions.

All this time the women have been learning—learning about the machinery of their association and of the Whitley councils, learning committee procedure, learning self-confidence in voicing their opinions, ideas and criticisms, learning to stand by—and up to—their male colleagues, learning more of the responsibilities of a local government officer, a trade unionist, and a citizen.

Are they now ready to put this learning into practice? The time has come for women's sub-committees to look at the position of women in their own branches, and on the district committees and the National Executive Council. Most should now have two or three members of whom they can say: "She is a sound and experienced trade unionist, and she is a good local government officer; therefore she is the one we must vote for." It is the duty of the women's sub-committees to do this and to see that all women members know who are the right people to elec

We must end the practice, still prevalent i many branches, of electing Miss A., Miss B or Miss C. to committees just "because the are women." Those who deplore the ap parent "sex segregation" created in th Association by the appointment of women' sub-committees are usually those who ar perpetuating it by appointing women to com mittees merely to represent women, no because they have, as individuals and regard less of sex, earned the right to be there.

You women members of branches whic have no sub-committees, are you satisfied tha you are able to learn all there is to know abou your Association, and that you have good an efficient representation on your branch execu tive? Let us see if in 1945 we cannot arous a still greater interest on the part of wome in the affairs of the Association to which the owe so much.

Study Circle Would Aid Returned Warriors

By J. MacNAB WEIR, Joint Town Chamberlain, Stirlin

THE idea of a study circle is not new, but all of which I have heard hitherto have confined their activities to one particular department. The Stirling Municipal Students' Circle began in this way in the finance department during the winter of 1936-37. It was restricted to young men, and the syllabus was confined to financial subjects, designed to assist the students in their day-to-day work and their professional examinations. The meetings were held under my chairmanship from September to March every Wednesday afternoon at 5 p.m. in a committee room, and finished at 6 p.m., or as soon thereafter as discussion permitted.

The following winter, at their own request, the young men of the town clerk's department joined their colleagues in the finance department and the basis of the syllabus was broadened. For the 1938-39 session, invitations were sent to the young men in all departments, and the ranks of the study circle swelled to 25. Heads of departments were only rarely included, and the talks were given entirely by members of the staff.

Some meetings were devoted to a "Quiz"—the questioning of one member on his job; a others a member would lead off on a chose subject, and answer questions "frae the body o the kirk." "Questions" meetings were popula On these occasions every member of the circl would send a question to me by the Monda morning before the meeting, and I would allocat these to suitable members for answer at the mee ing. Several model town council meetings wer held in the council chamber, strictly in accord ance with the standing orders. These prove most instructive and were enjoyed by the students my only regret was that the Town Counc (Scotland) Act, 1900, disqualifies a person fro being a councillor, if and while he holds an office in the gift or disposal of the council!

All members, even the most junior, were en couraged to take part in the discussions. Ab senteeism was almost unknown. The inte departmental wheels ran smoothly. Titles take at random from the syllabuses included loca authority income tax, burgh police and licensin court, outline of local authority finance, organisa tion of local government, sources of law, a da in the life of a sanitary inspector, law and practic relating to cheques, town planning, a local civi service, local income tax, rate estimating, lan ownership, government grants, conduct of meet ings and rules of debate, local government super annuation, growth and development of tow councils, and, on different evenings, the future o public assistance, water, roads, and local govern ment generally.

The study circle was discontinued in 1942, owin to the departure of practically all the students fo service in the Forces, but I hope to revive it unde the auspices of NALGO on their return and through it, to bring them up to date in loca government. The previous circle was rathe narrowly confined to young men but, in thes more enlightened days, I intend to invite al officers.

The work of the circle was appreciated by th town council, which readily granted the necessar accommodation and other facilities. At the con clusion of each session the local press gave th circle splendid publicity, which was anothe step towards good public relations.

Sherborne Adopts a Model Staff Charter

WHAT may fairly be described as one of the most comprehensive charters of salary and service conditions yet adopted anywhere in the country has recently been approved by **Sherborne** U.D.C., and we congratulate Mr. Norman Woodcock, lately NALGO district officer in the south-west, who prepared it, and the councillors who accepted it in full.

The charter covers practically everything NALGO seeks for its members. Vacancies, other than for juniors, are to be filled wherever possible by promotion of existing officers and, otherwise, by public advertisement. Juniors must have school certificate, and all officers are to be given opportunity, without loss of salary, to study for appropriate examinations. The salary scales are better than those recommended by the South Western provincial council—rising, in the general, clerical, and administrative section from £80 at 16 to £260 at 28 (with a satisfactory service bar at £170) and thereafter by £15 increments to a Grade V maximum of £500; and in the professional and technical section from £270 at the bottom of Grade A to £700 at the maximum of Grade E. All these scales are subject to the automatic addition of the current bonus recommended by the provincial council.

Normal working hours are to be 38, with compensatory leave for officers who attend evening meetings, and overtime is to be avoided or kept to a minimum. Holidays are to be at the rate of one day for each month of service during the first year and thereafter from 12 to 24 working days, according to grade.

Sick pay ranges from three weeks' full pay after six months' service to six months' full and six months' half pay after six years, with provision for longer periods on full pay in serious illness. Sickness while on holiday will be treated as sick leave and the unexpired period of holiday may be taken later.

Subsistence allowances for all officers are fixed at £1 11s. 6d. for 24 hours, with lesser amounts for shorter periods; heads of departments and deputies are allowed first-class travel, other officers third-class save when travelling with an officer or councillor entitled to go first-class. Officers required by the council to move from one district to another will have their removal expenses paid.

Discipline is left to heads of departments, with the important proviso that any accusation, proposal or report likely adversely to affect an officer must be given to him before it is presented to a committee, and that he is to be allowed, if he wishes, to appear before the committee either personally or through a representative of NALGO. Finally, the council accepts, and embodies in the regulations, the NALGO Code of Conduct.

The above is a brief summary only of a lengthy document, set out with admirable clarity. Were every local authority to adopt a similar code, its relations with its staff would be smoother, the staff would work more cheerfully, and efficiency would be enhanced all round.

Sheffield's £1,300 for B. & O. Fund in Two Years

In October, 1942, the Yorkshire district made a special appeal to all branches for increased support for the Benevolent and Orphan Fund. **Sheffield** branch immediately asked every member to subscribe, in addition to his ordinary monthly sixpence, an extra 6d. a month during the war, the proceeds to be regarded as a special contribution to meet special needs arising out of the war. Members responded so well that, up to date, more than £1,300 has been collected—without prizes, raffles, benefits or any other rewards save the gratitude of some unknown colleague who, through no fault of his own, finds himself in need. The only promise Sheffield has made is that this honourable "obligation" will cease with hostilities.

Other notable contributions recently include:

£50 from **Hereford C.C.** and another £5 5s. from **Grimsby**, from the profit of Sunday opening of cinemas.

£232 from **Bradford**—proceeds of a "Bring and Buy" sale organized by women members (£42), a prize draw (£43); three dances (£97), and a £50 donation from branch funds.

£32 from **Heckmondwike**, proceeds of dances.

£50 from **Stanley, Durham**, making £150 i the past three months—raised by a branch of 7 members!

£50 from **Coseley**—profit from a dance plus donation from branch funds.

£94 4s. from a dance organised by the women' sub-committee of **Bournemouth** branch.

A savings certificate from a member of **Wemble** branch—won by him in a horticultural competition.

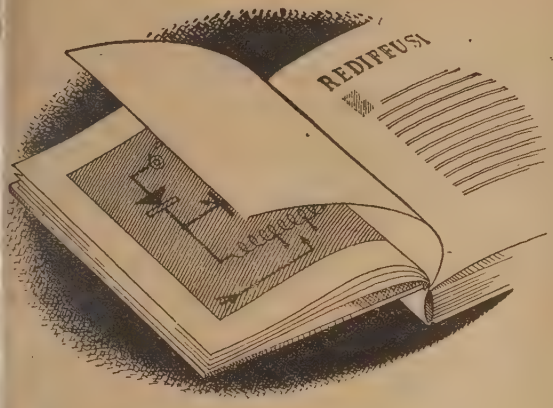
£132 16s. 11d. from **Salop C.C.** (proceeds dances).

£55 from **Swadlincote** (profit of annual dance)

£50 from **Oldham.**

Among recent smaller contributions are:

Amersham, £2 2s.; Dewsbury, £1 1s. 5d.; Driffiel £26 (dance); Epping Forest, £1 4s.; Grantham, £1 (dance); Haltemprice, £5 5s.; Keighley, £3 10s Oxford C.C., £5 11s. (dance); Richmond (Surre £5 5s.; St. Albans, £15 (social activities); Staffs C.C £10 10s. (from branch funds); and Worksop, £5 15 (social evening).



Opening of Chapter iii

25 years ago we touched with reverent fingers those curious boxes bristling with valves, coils and crystals, studded with dials and switches, linked up with dry cells and wet cells. Twice daily they would produce (if we were lucky) the magical voice of Savoy Hill in the headphones, "hello, everybody . . . . . this is 2 L.O. . . . "

That was wireless in the George Stevenson stage: "brutal but it worked." Then science began to simplify and streamline. Valves went out of sight; coils disappeared from view; batteries no longer cumbered the carpet; headphones became a museum piece. Tuning reduced itself to the niceties of three knobs . . . . two knobs . . . . *one* knob. Reception had civilised itself. There was still a next step. The same programme still didn't necessarily sound the same way in two different towns—or even in two neighbouring houses. It was still at the mercy of local conditions and individual apparatus. It might be pretty good or terribly bad.

Wired broadcasting opens Chapter iii. Rediffusion replaces aerial and receiver by direct line reception and a switch in the wall—just like the light switch. News and entertainment of unvarying quality can be laid on at will to any subscribing home in the area—just like the telephone service. Good reception is standardised as well as good transmission.

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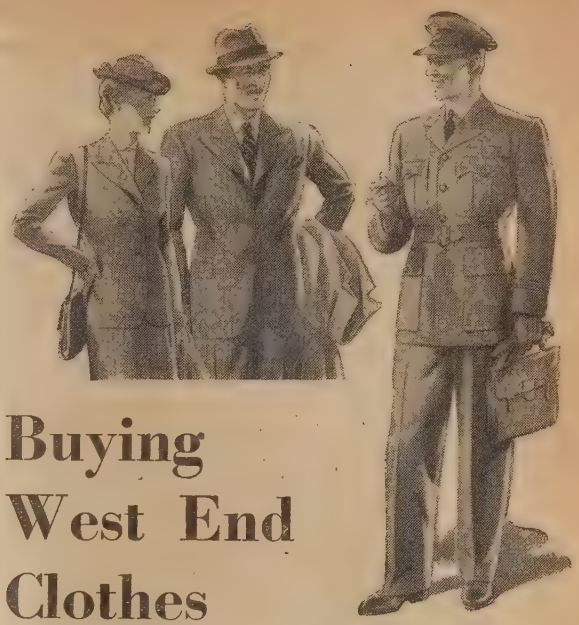

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SCOTTISH NOTES: New Scales for Women: Call for more Seats on the J.I.C.

THE joint industrial council has approved the following new salary scales for women:

Group 1—£110—£145; group 2—£100—£140; group 3—£95—£130; group 4—£90—£125.

These scales are to cover all typing and clerical assistants, with, in the latter section, a sub-division covering unskilled routine grades. These grades are to be clearly defined by the council and in no case may employees be excluded from the application of the scales unless they fall within the agreed classification and their exclusion has been approved by the council. There will be no sub-division in Group 4 authorities. Junior scales and those for Edinburgh and Glasgow remain to be negotiated.

Appeals Committee Held Up

The application for an appeals committee has been withdrawn temporarily, in view of lack of agreement on the employees' side. The matter is still being considered by the executive committee, and it is hoped that agreement will be reached in time to have this machinery set up early next year.

The withdrawal of the appeal emphasises the need for a reconstitution of the employees' panel. When the Joint Industrial Council was set up in 1937, NALGO had approximately 6,000 members in Scotland. It was difficult to establish a claim for a majority representation. But today our membership is almost double what it was then. It is still increasing, and we know that we represent at least 70 per cent of those employed on the administrative staffs of local authorities. We have, therefore, every right to a majority of NALGO representatives on the council. Until this is obtained, there is little chance of our being able to pursue Association policy as determined by Conference. No other trade union in a similar position would tolerate such an unfair handicap.

The National Executive Council may feel that we are not progressing to the same extent as are the provincial councils in England. This is not denied—but no English district has anything like the same difficulties.

The remedy is not easy, for the problem is a delicate one and must be handled with tact. It may be that some outside influence will be needed to bring about a solution satisfactory to all parties.

The scheme for the reinstatement and rehabilitation of officers discharged from the Forces has been referred to the executive committee of the council.

Social Security Problems

The Scottish district committee, at its October meeting, had a freer atmosphere than at previous meetings, and the representatives seemed more alive to the important issues which had been under discussion by the various sub-committees.

Realising the importance of the White Paper on social security and the effect it may have on many officers, the district committee appointed a special sub-committee to examine and report on the proposals. But, since a sub-committee can work well only if it has the co-operation of those responsible for its appointment, it is the duty of every branch to assist this and all other special sub-committees. Branch executives should discuss the problems referred to the sub-committees and should send their views to the district committee secretary. In this way branches and individuals can play their part in determining Association policy, and committees can obtain the widest range of information and opinion.

An entirely new departure was the appointment of a special committee to initiate a public campaign in support of the Association's policy of equality of pay and opportunity for women. Efforts are to be made to secure the collaboration of the Educational Institute of Scotland (N.U.T.), the Civil Service Clerical Association, and other unions interested.

Public Relations

Glasgow branch, in co-operation with the West of Scotland Joint Committee on Adult Education, has arranged a series of ten lectures on "Local Government and the Citizen." Mr. T. R. Innes, opening the series, suggested that the present rating system in the big towns could not stand the burden of post-war planning. One of the most important questions to be discussed would be how to interest the people in the way they were governed and how to secure the best type of representative on local authorities.

NURSING COUNCIL

Five NALGO Members Stand for Election

FIVE members of NALGO are standing for election to the General Nursing Council, voting papers for which have now been distributed to all state registered nurses, and must be returned by December 4. They are:

GENERAL PART OF THE REGISTER
Public Health Departments

Miss Jean McKinlay Calder, M.B.E., S.R.N., S.C.M., superintendent of health visitors, Manchester; secretary, Manchester emergency committee for the nursing profession and nursing recruitment committee; examiner and member, health visitors' examination committee, Royal Sanitary Institute; member, Ministry of Health advisory committee on welfare of mothers and young children; sectional committee, public health section, Royal College of Nursing; and NALGO women's services sub-committee.

Municipal Hospitals

Miss Mabel Louisa Marion Gay, S.R.N., St. Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth.

Miss Eva Mary Hillier, S.R.N., Crumpsall Hospital, Manchester.

Miss Alice Mabel Rose, S.R.N., City Hospital, Nottingham.

Nurses on the general part of the register are entitled to vote for each of the above candidates.

SUPPLEMENTARY PART OF THE REGISTER
Male Nurses

Robert John Ousby, S.R.N., Belmont Road Emergency Hospital, Liverpool, and a member of the General Nursing Council since 1937, serving on the general purposes, finance, registration, and disciplinary and penal committees.

Male nurses on the supplementary part of the register are entitled to vote in this section. NALGO urges all nurses eligible to vote for these candidates.

Obituary

Miss J. Bryson, N. Dracup and J. W. Nelson

We regret to record the deaths of:

Miss Janet Bryson, for 26 years a member of the town chamberlain's staff, Edinburgh, and treasurer of the Stirling branch.

Norman Dracup, for 25 years on the staff of the city treasurer at Bradford, a former editor of the branch magazine and chairman and junior vice-president of the branch, and for some time a member of the N.E.C., aged 39. Mr. Dracup figured in a dispute between NALGO and Bradford city council in 1941-2, when, on his election to the N.E.C., he was told that he must give up his NALGO activities or be deprived of certain of his official duties. After a long controversy, the council gave way and passed a resolution giving full freedom to its staff to engage in trade union activities "under reasonable conditions." About a year ago, Mr. Dracup left the corporation service for a post in industry.

J. W. Nelson, divisional surveyor, Westmorland C.C., a member of the branch executive since its formation, and a former branch chairman and president.

APPOINTMENT VACANT

CLYDEBANK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Management Committee of Clydebank Public Library invite applications for the post of Librarian at a commencing salary of £400 per annum, rising by annual increments of £25 to £575 per annum with, in addition, a temporary cost-of-living bonus in accordance with the J.I.C. scale of awards. Applicants must be experienced in all branches of the work connected with Public Libraries and, if not at present in a designated post under Superannuation Acts, must not be over 45 years of age. Canvassing will be a disqualification. Applications stating age, experience, etc., should be lodged with the undersigned not later than 30th November, 1944.

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Clerk to Library Committee.

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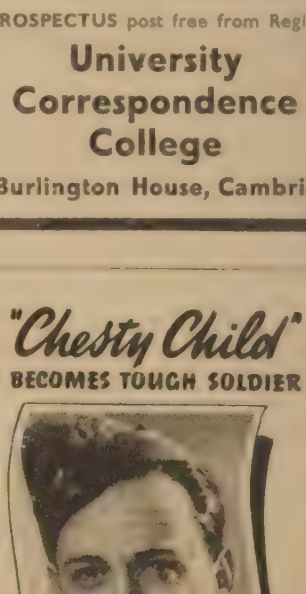

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SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

ORTH WESTERN AND NORTH WALES

row-in-Furness C.B. and **Ince-in-Makerfield U.D.** increased superannuation allowances for non-butory service to 60ths.

nchester C.B. has abandoned its policy of restrict-per cent of positions open to junior entrants to the en of Manchester ratepayers. Every junior position nchester is now open to applicants wherever they ive.

mbers of the staff at **Whitehaven,** who have to been covered by the Cumberland county branch, made application to form their own branch. This e the third separate branch in Cumberland county, thers being Carlisle city and Workington borough.

WEST MIDLANDS

officers of **Upton-on-Severn R.D.C.** have formed ich.

oitwich B., Coseley U.D., and **Stone U.D.** have ed the provincial council scales of salaries.

gby B. has adopted the following salary scales : and women : £52 (at 16) + 13—£91 ; thence men 5 (at 21)—£125-£135 + 15—£225 ; women £104 20) + 13—£156.

Grade B, £240 + 15—£300 ; Grade C, £295 + 15—0 ; Grade D, £350 + 25—£425 ; Grade E, £430 + —£480.

en : Grade B, £170 + 15—£200 ; Grade C, £200 + —£230 ; Grade D, £230 + 15—£260 ; Grade E, 5 + 15—£305.

5th Whitley council bonus award has been adopted authorities in the district, employing approximately officers. **Birmingham** has its own scheme ly equal ; one borough and one urban district have ed the higher J.I.C. award for workmen ; and 33 rities, employing approximately 210 officers, have et adopted the scheme or are paying alternative

olverhampton C.B. has revised its holiday scale to: years' service—12 working days ; 5-10 years' e—14 working days ; over ten years and all earning and over, irrespective of service—18 working days. e provincial council has approved the scheme for einstatement and rehabilitation of officers discharged the Forces on medical grounds, has re-affirmed the mmendation that, as a general rule, appointments g wartime should be temporary, and is considering pay scheme and a revision of the recommended scales.

EAST MIDLANDS

Soke of Peterborough C.C. has adopted the ring salary scales :

Grade A, £50 (at 16) + 10 (1) + 15 (3) + 20 (1) + (2) + 15 (3) + 18 (1)—£208 ; Grade B, £175 + 12 233 ; Grade C, £200 + 12—£284.

ch : Grade A, £50 (at 16) + 10—£150 ; Grade B, 0 + 10—£170 ; Grade C, £150 + 10—£200.

ries at higher rates are to be fixed in relation to dual posts.

Buxton B. and **New Mills U.D.** have adopted the revised scales of the Lancashire and Cheshire provincial council.

Newark B. has adopted provincial council scale I.

SOUTH-EASTERN

East Sussex C.C., which recently joined the provincial council, has adopted the current Whitley bonus scale in lieu of its less favourable former scale.

New Romney and **Tenterden B.s.,** and **Seaford U.D.,** none of whom had hitherto followed any Whitley recommendations, have also adopted the current bonus scale.

Folkestone, Guildford, and **Rye B.s., Horsham U.D.,** and **Hambledon R.D.** have adopted new grading schemes based on the provincial council's salary scales.

Rye B., the last authority in the district to supplement the service pay of officers in H.M. Forces, has agreed to adopt the Bolton terms, with retrospective operation.

Chatham, Gillingham and **Rochester** branches have decided to form a joint consultative committee.

SOUTHERN

Banbury B. has adopted the provincial council recommendations on service conditions.

Newbury B. has adopted the provincial council salary scales and recommendations on service conditions.

SOUTH WESTERN

Dorchester B. and **Minehead U.D.** have adopted the provincial council salary scales.

SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE

Aberdare U.D. has agreed to up-grade seven officers from the provincial council's grade E—£310-£350—into a special grade—£350 x £25—£400—beginning at £375, with effect from August 1, 1944.

Barry B. and **Rhondda U.D.** have agreed to accept the principle of 60ths for non-contributory service.

Carmarthen C.C. and **Merthyr Tydfil C.B.** have agreed to grant an increase of 25 per cent in the basic salaries of supplementary teachers from April 1 last.

Llanelly B. has adopted, with a few alterations, the provincial council's model grading scheme.

Llantrissant R.D., in response to an application by the district officer, has adopted an improved grading scheme with effect from April 1 last.

Milford Haven U.D. is now considering a model grading scheme of the provincial council.

Cost of Living Down

The Ministry of Labour cost of living index fell one point last month to 201, representing an increase of 29.7 per cent since the outbreak of war.

Headquarters Address

The General Secretary, NALGO, 24, Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1. (Telegram : NATASSOC, Parl, London. Telephone : WHitehall 9351.)

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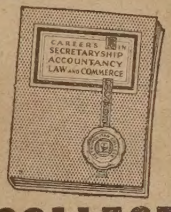

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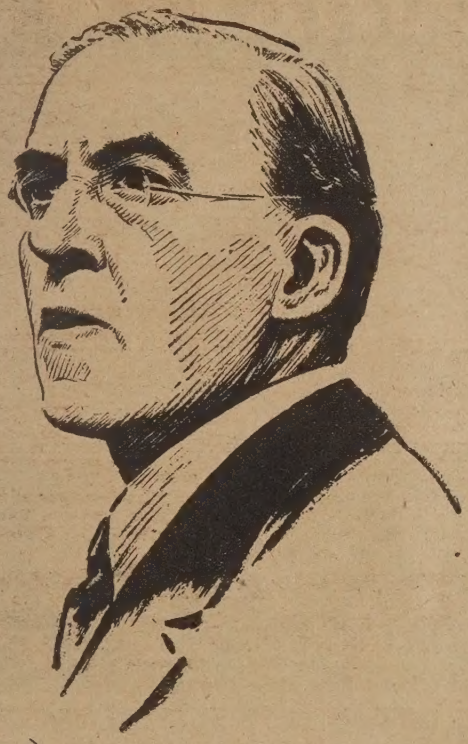

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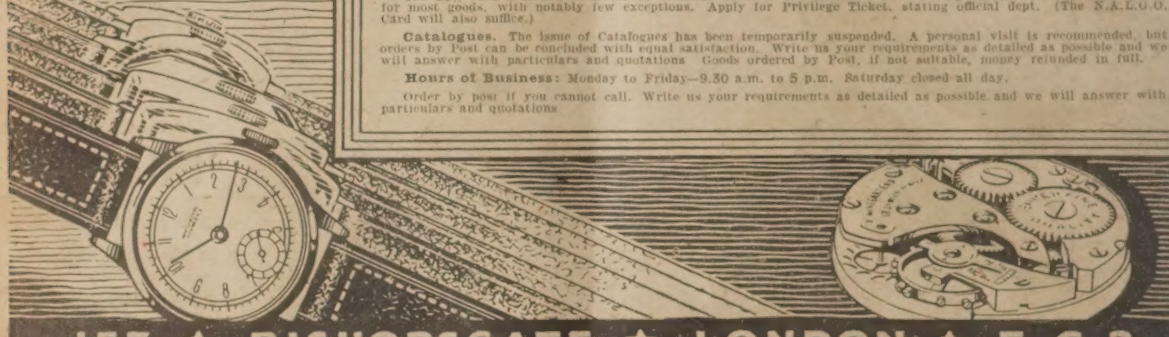

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